than one and a half years of signing the Convention on Bio-diversity at Rio?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) India, alongwith 156 other countries, signed the Convention on Biological Diversity during the UNCED Earth Summit held at, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June, 1992. After signature, a number of countries including India have ratified this Convention which has come into force about two months ago. Action is under consideration to prepare for legislation for the conservaiton of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of technologies taking into account the public interest.

Allotment of Waste Lands

218. SHRI M.A. BABY:
SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that village or town waste lands are allotted to persons who apply to bring out afforestation;

(b) what are the norms that are followed in these allotments by the authorities;

(c) whether Government provide any subsidy or assistance for the encouragement of the same;

(d) if so, what is the minimum amount and maximum amount; and

(e) the total number of acres brought under this scheme afforestation in the entire country as a whole?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Afforestation Scheme

219. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN:
SHRI M.A. BABY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the norms recommended by Government in the afforestation scheme;

(b) what steps have been taken by Government to prohibit the public from throwing of dead bodies in the Ganges;

(c) whether Pollution Control officers have taken precautions to put the violators before a court of law; and

(d) if not, what action has been taken so far or would be taken in the near future to avert such pollution emmiting acts by individuals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Under the 20 Point Programme, afforestation and tree planting activities are undertaken annually keeping in view the availability of funds. In undertaking these activities, special attention is given to the regeneration of degraded forest areas and lands adjoining forest areas, national parks, sanctuaries and other protected areas as also the ecologically fragile areas like the Western Himalayas, Aravallis and Western Ghats. Considerations of adopting appropriate moisture and soil conservation measures, integrated watershed development, planting of indigenous species producing fuelwood, fodder and other non-timber forest produce for the local village communities, adoption of appropriate technologies for regeneration of degraded forest areas, creation of general awareness and promoting the involvement of the rural people etc. are kept in view while designing and

implementing the afforestation and tree planting programme.

(b) to (d) To prevent the throwing of dead bodies/half burnt bodies in the Ganga, electric crematoria and improved wood based crematoria have been set up under the Ganga Action Plan in some of the towns. The steps taken to control pollution include the following:—

(i) Effluent standards have been prescribed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;

(ii) A network of ambient water quality monitoring stations have been set up;

(iii) Industries have been asked to comply with consent requirements of the State Pollution Control Boards to keep the discharge of effluents within the stipulated limits;

(iv) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment and shifting of polluting industries from congested areas;

(v) A scheme has been initiated to give assistance to clusters of small scale industrial units as well as local bodies for setting up common effluent treatment plants;

(vi) A time-bound action plan for control of effluents from the 17 categories of polluting industries has been prepared in consultation with the State Governments.

Guidelines to Protect the Beaches

220. SHRI V . GOPALASAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1057 given in the Rajya Sabha on 4th August, 1993 and to state:

(a) whether the construction work of beach resort/hotel at Papanasini beach (Varkala) in Trivandrum has been actually stopped or not;

(b) if so, when; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, whether Government will demolish the whole structure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Stay order on construction was issued from the Local Administration Secretary, Government of Kerala on 10th June, 1993. The Ministry has further advised the State Government for taking immediate action to ensure that the provisions of the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification are not violated.

Effect of Destruction of Babri Mosque on Non-Muslims Working in Saudi Arabia

221. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that simmering anger over the destruction of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya continues to affect non-muslim Indians, especially Hindus, working in Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what diplomatic measures have been taken or are proposed to be taken to ameliorate such situation being faced by non-Muslims in Saudi Arabia?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) The Government had received some reports containing information on non-renewal of contracts of some non-Muslim Indians from some companies in Saudi Arabia.

(b) The matter was taken up at diplomatic level with Saudi authorities who have denied any discrimination against non-Muslim Indians on the basis of religion. Embassy of India, Riyadh and Consulate General of India, Jeddah have also rendered assistance whenever required.